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Editorials Analysis Opinion

PAGE 6

ASTORIA, OREGON, TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 1972

## What's The Aim?

Some business and industry leaders in Oregon have formed the Western Environmental Trade Assn. The name sounds like a group of businesses interested in protecting the environment, but the association's first announcement sounded otherwise.

The WETA officials said they wanted to combat "environmental hysteria" and had some critical words for the state Dept. of Environmental Quality. The Daily Astorian has been told that the association, spearheaded by the Assn. of Oregon Industries, wants to replace some environmentally concerned state legislators with those more interested in economic development.

Yes, environmental hysteria is a problem here and there as the dangers of pollution, for example, become exaggerated. And it is true that the Dept. of Environmental Quality is headed now by a person who talks in blunt, tough terms — L. B. Day.

But in organizing to combat the "environmentalists" and to elect development-minded legislators, the Assn. of Oregon Industries may be displaying what it wants to fight — hysteria.

It's unclear whether the business and industry officials have organized to fight just the loudest and most vociferous environmentalists, or whether they want to reverse the whole trend of protecting and preserving the Oregon environment.

If they are reacting just to the loudest guardians of the environment and want to knock heads with them, the business leaders are making a tactical mistake. First, the most radical environmental protectors don't set the policies or make the laws and, second, business and industry can promote their cause better through constructive proposals than through squabbling with those whom they view as hysterical.

But if the new association thinks the Oregon Legislature has been unreasonable in its actions — and plans to replace some legislators point to that belief — that is something else.

Does the Western Environmental Trade Assn. oppose the Legislature's deadline on field burning in the Willamette Valley? Its restricting filling in river estuaries? Its increased appropriation for more state environmental technicians and inspectors?

Its measure requiring deposits on bottles? Its controls on billboards? Its desire for car-emission devices? Its requirement of permits for industrial plants emitting air pollutants? Its establishment of a council to select sites for nuclear plants and oversee nuclear safety?

If the new group feels those actions of the 1971 Legislature were undesirable, the business and industrial leaders will probably find themselves in the minority in this state. Oregonians have shown their real concern that this fortunate state be protected from the carelessness and ruin that have struck other states.

But if the Western Environmental Trade Assn. wants to work for that needed balance between development of jobs and protection of the environment, they would do constructive work. The group has not spoken that way, however.

## The Y Pool

It's been a long campaign, but the Astoria YMCA is proceeding with a new indoor swimming pool. The Y Board is now lining up an architect to design the pool, which is to be 75 feet long and four lanes.

Despite a favorable initial response to the call for donations, the \$300,000 Y fund drive is some \$13,000 short of pledges. Board members hope that the \$300,000 goal will be reached as individuals and firms see the project progressing.

Y officials say that the pool and locker rooms will be built. They say the only uncertain aspect of the project is whether enough money will come in to pay for teen recreation rooms, an extra-wide pool deck and sauna.

The project will entail a good deal of expense aside from just the construction of a swimming tank. The site, the sunken area between the Y building and Exchange Street, is not an easy one for construction. The pool will have to be linked to the rest of the YMCA. And a full-time person will have to be on duty at the pool.

Those who have contributed to the pool fund should be commended, and anyone wanting to make donations toward the \$300,000 goal will be giving to a worthy cause.

## In Days Gone By

Fifty years ago: Astoria Evening Budget, Jan. 4, 1922.

limbs, in violation of the dress code.

Twenty-five years ago: Astorian Evening Budget, Jan. 4, 1947.

Illwaco Mayor Howerton ordered police to "shoot first and investigate afterwards" in response to a series of robberies.

The City of Astoria canceled

liens against property owned by the Navy.

Fifteen years ago: Astorian Evening Budget, Jan. 4, 1957.

Miss 1957 (the first born in Astoria) arrived in Astoria at Columbia Hospital. The girl, first child of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Paetow, was named Carolyn Rae. Paetow was an officer with the Astoria Police Dept.

Chamber of Commerce directors named Clifford Poole a director to fill the two years remaining in the term of Harry Swanson, an aide to governor-elect Bob Holmes.

## Runaways Bill

BALTIMORE (AP) — A bill establishing shelters for runaway children and a national network to help families locate runaways will be introduced in Congress early next year, says Rep. Paul S. Sarbanes.

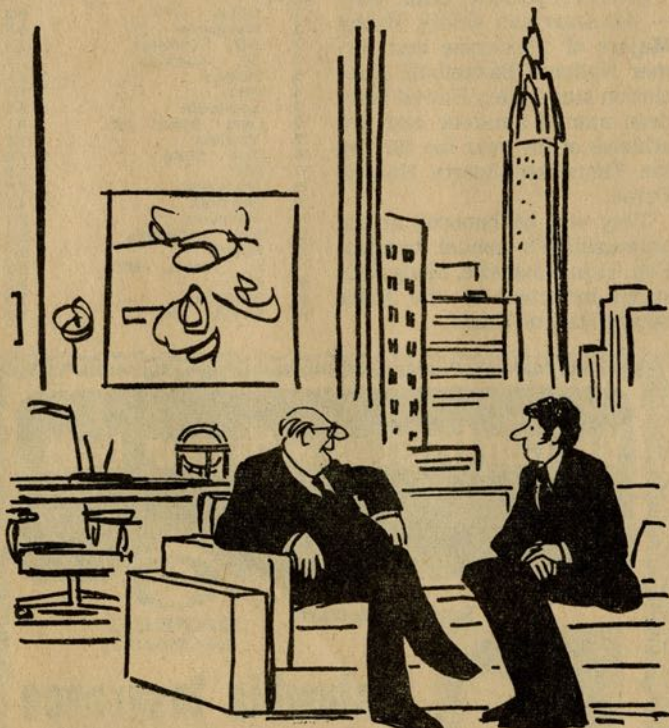
The Maryland Democrat told newsmen Thursday that the measures are needed because of what he termed a "marked nationwide increase in runaways."

In Maryland, he said, the increase has been about 17 per cent over the past year. The total number of missing children in the state may reach 6,000, he added.

## Israeli Toll

TEL AVIV (AP) — Nineteen Israeli soldiers were killed and 113 wounded by guerrillas in Israel and the occupied territories during 1971, an army spokesman announced Sunday. In the same period 213 guerrillas were killed by Israeli forces, the spokesman said.

## BERRY'S WORLD



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"The secret of my success is hard work, being prepared when opportunity knocks, a bit of luck and large contributions to various political campaigns!"



Military Barracks Are Now a Junior High School

## Ft. Stevens Is a Historical Place

Editor's note: Old Fort Stevens, on the northwest corner of Oregon, was recently designated a Historic Place, by the National Park Service. Former Daily Astorian editor Fred Andrus was one who served a stint at the fort. He gives here some of the fort's history.

Old Fort Stevens never fired a shot in anger during its 84 years and four wars of active military service, but nevertheless fully deserves the designation of Historic Place just given it by the National Park Service.

Fort Stevens is unique among the many harbor defense posts that studded our coasts from Maine to Texas and from San Diego to Puget Sound because it is the only one of them that had a shot fired at it since the War of 1812.

The old fort's greatest day was June 22, 1942. About 11:15 p.m. the Japanese submarine I-25, commanded by Lt. Comdr. Meiji Tagami, fired 17 rounds from its 5.5-inch deck gun at Fort Stevens.

The bombardment lasted about a half hour and was totally ineffective. One round fell about 100 yards in front of Battery Russell, but the rest hit only sand and brush south of the fort.

There was no return fire. The principal reason was that Coast Artillery doctrine called for a fixed harbor defense post to withhold fire when a lone hostile vessel shot at it, as such an attack presumably would be for reconnaissance, to draw fire that would disclose exact location of the guns.

Aside from this doctrine, return fire would have been futile, as I-25 remained safely about 2,000 yards beyond the 16,000-yard effective range of Battery Russell's 10-inch disappearing rifled cannon of Spanish-American War vintage. This was the fort's only active battery at that time.

This writer vividly remembers the bombardment of Fort Stevens. We were awakened from sleep by the racket and looked out the south window of our hillside home in Astoria Court district. Flash of the submarine's guns was plainly visible, followed by the boom of the cannon and whistling of each projectile as it flashed landward. The fact that some ship was firing at Fort Stevens was quite obvious.

The event was a big news story and the staff of the Astorian-Budget was kept busy next day, answering requests for information that came in from all over the nation. The Army authorities at Fort Stevens did not attempt to suppress the news, despite wartime censorship, and were quite cooperative in permitting reporters to see shell craters in the sand — only evidence there was of a hostile attack.

Some reports indicated that people of this area were panicked by the attack, but the impression one got was that actually people were somewhat thrilled and pleased that Clatsop County had actually become physically involved in the war. One family took off for Iowa, but otherwise there was no sign of fear.

Fort Stevens at that time was garrisoned largely by men of the 249th Coast Artillery, a National Guard regiment that had been called to federal duty in late 1940 when other Oregon National Guard troops were also mustered into federal service.

Later in World War II the garrison was augmented by troops of the 18th Coast Artillery, largely composed of Ohio men drafted into the Army, and these troops manned Forts Stevens, Canby and Columbia throughout the war.

Fort Stevens was built in 1862-3 but was not garrisoned until 1865.

Congress had considered providing funds to provide defenses at the mouth of the Columbia as far back as 1820, but it was not until the Civil War broke out that it provided appropriations, first of \$100,000 in 1861 and then \$200,000 more a year later, to establish forts at Point Adams and Cape Disappointment.

Fort Stevens was built by a Corps of Engineers detachment commanded by Capt. George H. Elliott, who also built Fort Canby across the river.

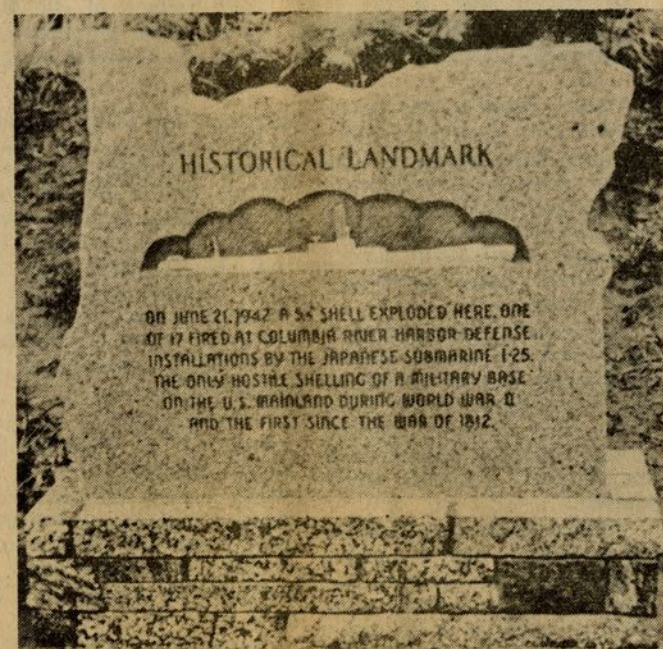
Fort Stevens was an earthwork fort, surrounded by a 30-foot ditch. Its original armament included one 15-inch gun, five 10-inch guns, five 8-inch Rodman rifled guns and five 200-pounder Parrott guns, all mounted on steel carriages.

Similar armament was installed at Fort Canby.

Fort Stevens, named for Isaac Ingalls Stevens, governor of the Washington territory in 1853-7 and later killed in action by Confederate forces at Chantilly, Va., in 1861, was first garrisoned by troops of Company B, 8th California Volunteer Infantry regiment, commanded by Capt. Gaston d'Artois.

There was considerable reason for building forts at the Columbia River mouth. No defenses existed on the Pacific Coast north of San Francisco. Confederate cruisers were reported raiding merchant ships in the Pacific, and there was some suspicion that the British Government, which had been somewhat friendly to the Confederacy, might permit such raiders to refit and obtain supplies at the new naval base of Esquimalt on the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

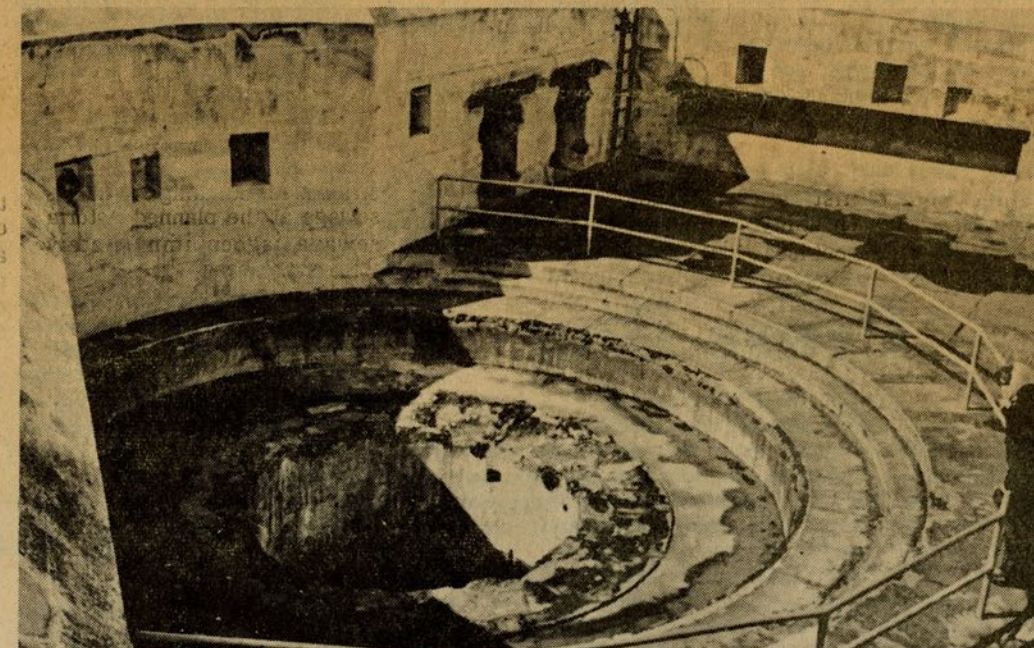
There was also concern in Washington, D.C., about the grandiose ideas of the French emperor Napoleon III, who had



Spot Where Shell Hit



Visitor Inspects Ft. Stevens Guardhouse



Where the Disappearing Guns Once Were

established a puppet government in Mexico under Maximilian, an Austrian prince.

At any rate, Forts Stevens and Canby gave considerable comfort to residents of Northwestern United States.

Fort Stevens ebbed and flowed in size with fluctuations in foreign affairs. Construction of modern gun batteries in concrete emplacements took place from 1896 to 1904, under impact of the Spanish-American war. These included Batteries Lewis, Walker, Mishler, Pratt, Freeman, Smur, Clark and finally Russell, built in 1904. It was named for Maj. Gen. David A. Russell, 8th U.S. Infantry, killed in action at Opequon, Va., in 1864.

Fort Stevens had 75 commanders during its career, including one black man, a sergeant caretaker who was its lone occupant during the 1880s.

Its garrison swelled to 5,000 men in World War I, when it was used for training troops, shrank again in the 1930s, and rose to more than 2,500 men in World War II.

When that war broke out, Battery Russell was the only useful armament. Soon a battery of 90-millimeter aircraft guns was established on outer Clatsop spit, and a similar battery was emplaced across the river, on the sandspit surrounding Jetty A. When this writer was assigned to duty in the Columbia Harbor Defenses in 1943, construction of a battery of 6-inch rifles, equipped with modern electronic fire control equipment, was under way. This battery was completed in time to fire a few practice shots before peace came.

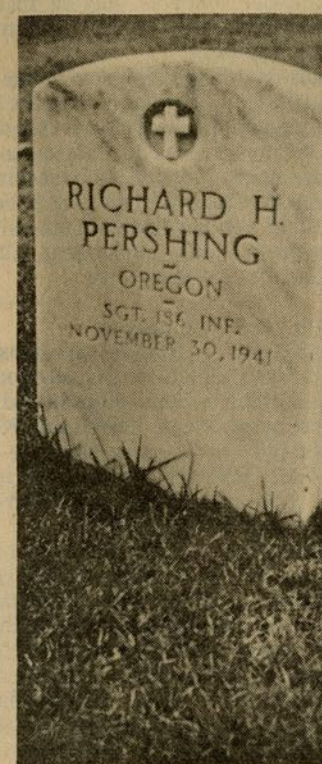
Fort Stevens has vivid memories for one who served there. There was the shock to learn, on arrival, that new officers were expected to make formal calls and leave calling cards. This involved a hasty resort to the Astorian-Budget printing shop to have some cards turned out. There were the colorful retreat parades once weekly on the parade ground, with martial music. There was a tour of duty in old Battery Mishler, where underground tunnels had been converted into a central command post for the entire harbor defenses and where one lived for 48 hours at a time. There was the occasion when the 90-millimeter battery on Clatsop spit conducted a target practice. A round or two must have gone astray, because the commander of the companion battery on Jetty A called on the phone: "Quit shooting. We surrender."

Fort Stevens ceased to be an active military post in 1947, when all United States fixed harbor defenses were eliminated as obsolete, but its concrete emplacements will long remain to remind visitors of a vanished phase of U.S. military history.

Unfortunately, the Army was too swift after the war to scrap all the old guns that had for years armed the harbor defense posts of the nation.

When, a few years later, effort was made to restore Battery Russell, 10-inch disappearing guns couldn't be found. Oregon's Congressional delegation competed with Washington's group for the only remaining guns of that kind, at Subic Bay in the Philippines, but Washington had more clout and if you want to see guns like those that stood silent at Battery Russell when the I-25 was firing at them, you have to go to Fort Casey on Puget Sound.

—Fred Andrus



Final Home

Daily  
Astorian  
Photos by  
Don Roberts



# The Mail Had to Go Through, And Astoria Was the Place for It



Post Office Crew Numbered 14 in 1909

There they are. The postmaster and staff of the Astoria Post Office in 1909. Standing left to right are Astor Salvon, assistant postmaster, M. Walter Pederson, Bert Grush, Hans Bue, Birdie McCroskey, Postmaster

Frank J. Carney, Nan Reed, August Fricke, Sherman Pinnell, George Olson, Otto Gramms, Andrew McCroskey, David Grush and Patrick Shea.

The name of John M. Shively looms big in the early history of Astoria, and his biggest achievement was establishment here of the first U.S. Post Office west of the Rocky Mountains.

Shively was a Virginian, trained as a surveyor, who came West with a wagon train in 1843, with a pack horse carrying his surveying instruments.

Shively's first major job was platting of Oregon City for Dr. John McLoughlin, the long-time Hudson's Bay Co. chief at Fort Vancouver, Wash.

Those were the days when the United States and Great Britain disputed ownership of the Oregon territory. Dr. McLoughlin evidently sensed that the United States might win, and he had plans to make his home in Oregon City when his job at Vancouver ran out.

In November 1843, Shively moved to Astoria, then occupied by Hudson's Bay Co. with James Birnie in charge.

Shively staked a land claim, got out his surveying instruments, and proceeded to plat a townsite on his claim, apparently over the vigorous objections of Birnie.

The American, who according to all accounts had a vigorous, assertive personality, refused to quit. He built a cabin on his claim, and later bought the first frame house ever built in Astoria. It had been constructed by the Rev. Ezra Fisher, a Baptist missionary.

Shively bought this house in 1846 and it later housed the Post Office.

## First Post Office

Site of this first Post Office, on 15th Street between Franklin and Grand, is now set aside as a shrine and marked by a monument as result of the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Ross, of Astoria. Shively went East soon after buying the

Fisher house, and in Washington, D.C., he apparently had a hand in the negotiations between the United States and Canada which settled the boundary question, giving the present states of Oregon and Washington to the United States.

At any rate, Shively obtained from President James K. Polk a commission as postmaster for the Oregon territory, including what is now the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. Date of the commission was March 8, 1847.

Shively and his family returned to Oregon by wagon train, arriving in the summer and moving into the home on what is now 15th Street. Shively brought a pouch of mail from Washington with him and set up the Post Office in a downstairs bedroom of his home.

## Gold Rush Fever

Shively quit the job in 1849, going to California for the Gold Rush, and turned over the postal duties to David Ingalls, who had moved to the infant village of Astoria a few years before.

However, John Adair, who had come to Astoria in 1848 with a commission as collector of Customs for the Northwest, notified postal authorities in Washington, D.C., that Shively had abandoned the job. Adair won for himself the postmastership.

Adair had bought the land claim of A. E. Wilson east of Scow Bay. He had established his customs house there, near what is now 32nd and Leif Erikson Drive.

Adair moved the Post Office to his Upper Astoria customs house, leaving settlers in the area west of Scow Bay in the lurch as far as handy collection of mail was concerned.

The Post Office in those days, it should be noted, did not serve Astoria alone. Only one on the Pacific Slope, it distributed mail

through the entire Northwest after receiving it by sea around Cape Horn. Mail went by river boat to the Willamette Valley, by stage coach, freight wagon, or horseback traveler to its destination.

Adair held the postmastership only one year, and there were several other postmasters during the next decade in which the office apparently remained in Upper Astoria.

## Shively Returns

Shively returned from the Gold Rush in the 1850s, but did not succeed in winning back the postmastership, although he tried. The office was, however, moved back to the old Shively home in 1861.

Astoria had begun to grow and the Post Office facility in one room of the former Shively home was becoming inadequate.

In 1868 the government bought for \$8,000 the block where the present Post Office stands. Construction of a new, stone Federal building was begun in 1869 and completed Jan. 25, 1873, at a cost of \$67,966.

The structure, the first stone building in Astoria, housed not only the Post Office but the U.S. Customs Service, U.S. Public Health Service and Federal Agricultural Agency.

The building served for many years, but after the turn of the century it began to deteriorate, due to part to porous quality of the sandstone of which it was built. Driving rain seeped through in wind storms.

Citizens of Astoria launched a campaign for a new building. Finally, the government authorized its construction in 1931. The old building was torn down and the Post Office was moved to the ground floor of the Elks Temple while the new one was built.

The present structure was finished in

1933 and postal workers moved in. They have operated from this building ever since.

The 100th anniversary of founding of the Astoria Post Office was celebrated with a three-day observance in March 1947, under direction of Euna Pearl Burke, postmaster of the time, and the only woman among the 24 postmasters Astoria has had in 125 years.

## Postmasters

The list of postmasters, with their years of service, includes:

John M. Shively, March 9, 1847-1849; John Adair, 1849-50; Butler Anderson 1850-52; Samuel Seymour, 1852-53; Truman P. Powers, 1853-57; Joseph Jeffers, 1857-59; Adam Van Dusen, 1859-61; Charles L. Parker, 1861-73; William Chance, 1873-81.

(From 1878 to 1881 Astoria had two post offices, one downtown and one in Upper Astoria, then a separate community. Christian Leinenweber was Upper Astoria postmaster, 1877-81. In the latter year the two were combined into one post office, and Leinenweber was Astoria postmaster until 1886.)

Subsequent postmasters include: John C. Bell, 1886-90; John H. D. Gray, 1890; James W. Hare, 1890-94; Herman Wise, 1894-98; Charles McDonald, 1898-1900; Granville Reed, 1900-05; John Hahn, 1905-09; Frank J. Carney, 1909-13; Herman Wise, 1913-21; Charles W. Halderman, 1922-34; Harry Burke, 1934-37; Euna Pearl Burke, 1937-52; Arthur Paquet, 1952-53; Neil Morfitt, 1953-68; Dan A. Thiel, 1968-.

Longest tenure by an individual has been 15 years, by both Mrs. Burke and Morfitt. Charles Parker, Herman Wise and Charles Halderman each held the post 12 years.

## Political Patronage

During most of the existence of the Post

Office here, postmasters have changed with the changing of the national administration from Republican to Democratic party control, and vice versa. Postmasterships were for years handed out as political patronage and for no other reason.

Now this is gone. One of the biggest changes in operation of the Astoria Post Office, as well as others around the nation, came on July 1, 1971, when the new U.S. Postal Service, a Federally-controlled corporation, replaced the old Post Office Dept.

The postmaster-general no longer is a member of the Presidential cabinet, but the head of an independent establishment under the executive branch of government, with responsibility to run the service as a business.

"We now have annual dollar budgets, which we must live within," said Dan Thiel, Astoria postmaster.

Postal rates are now set up on a basis of providing funds to operate the service, and are controlled by a rate commission appointed by the President.

Each postmaster is more responsible for operation of his office; even for management of the Post Office building.

Formerly the building was managed by the General Services Administration; now the postmaster is responsible for its upkeep, and building operation is on a budgetary basis. When the heating plant fails, the postmaster must see that it is repaired instead of merely calling GSA to fix it.

## 'Retail Employees'

There are other changes. Postal clerks who serve at the windows are now listed as "retail employees."

Where there were once 15 regional Post

Office Branch offices throughout the nation, now there are five.

In the western United States, where once there were three, now there is one, at San Francisco. The ones at Seattle and Denver have been abolished.

The Astoria Post Office in 1972 lists 37 regular employees with annual payroll of \$385,417. There are 11 city mail routes serving 14,523 people and four rural routes serving an additional 5,067 people.

Annual cancellations of outbound first class mail number 3.5 million, an increase of 400,000 over 25 years ago.

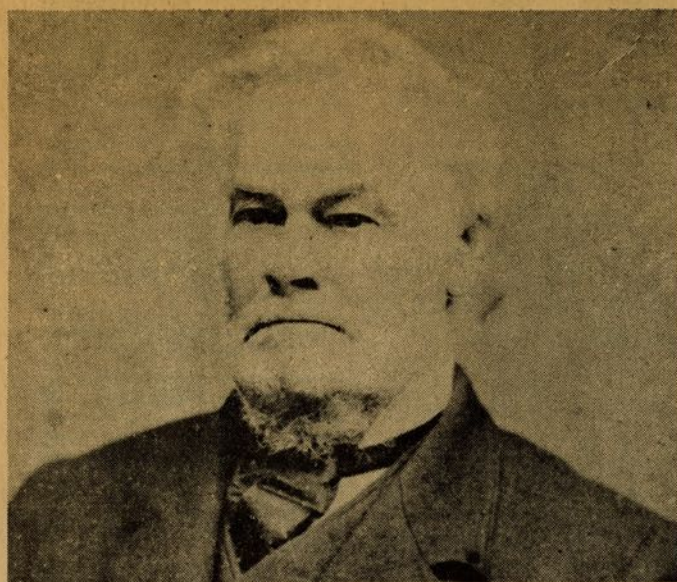
The Post Office building houses 14 other agencies in addition to the postal service. These are U.S. Civil Service, Federal Credit Union, U.S. Air Force recruiting agency; U.S. Dept. of Commerce; Soil Conservation Service; Customs office; Internal Revenue Service; Coast Guard marine Documentation Office; Bureau of Commercial Fisheries; Selective Service Administration; Dept. of Agriculture; Federal Housing Agency; County Extension Agency; and Neighborhood Youth Corps.

## Post Office Trees

The trees planted around the Post Office block were planted in 1895. They are European sycamores on the north and south sides, cork elms on the east and cork maples on the west side.

The trees survived partial burial in the early 1930s when the old Post Office was torn down and the new one built. The old Post Office yard was 8 to 10 feet below the present one. When the yard was raised to street level and the new structure built, boxes were built around the trees. They were gradually filled with earth, a little bit at a time, over a period of about three years to enable them to survive.

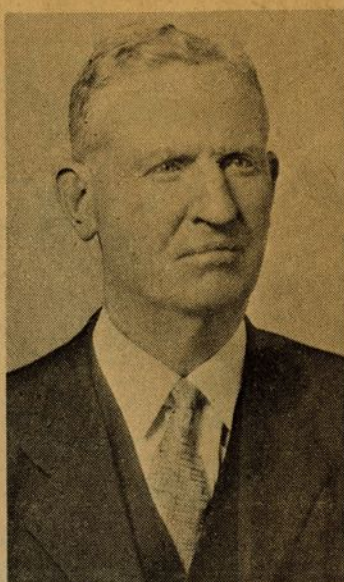
—Fred Andrus



JOHN SHIVELY  
First Postmaster, 1847-49



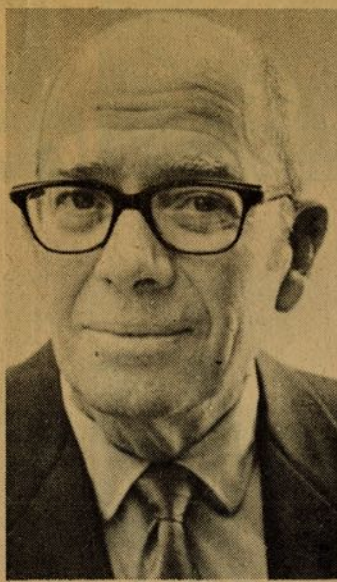
C. W. HALDERMAN  
1922-34



HARRY BURKE  
1934-37



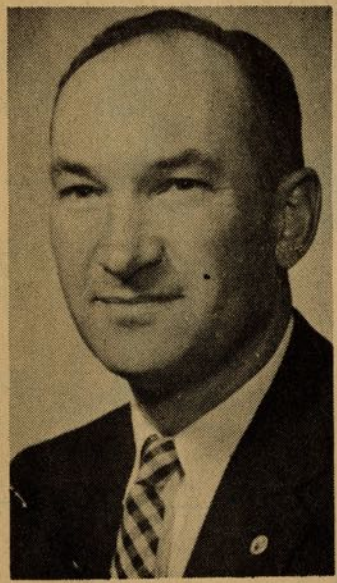
EUNA PEARL BURKE  
1937-52



ARTHUR PAQUET  
1952-53



NEIL MORFITT  
1953-68



DAN A. THIEL  
1968--



This Structure Served as Astoria Post Office from 1873 to 1931

## First Post Office West of the Rockies Celebrates Its 125th Anniversary

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